

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 MANAGU 00378 252321Z  
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01  
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 AID-05 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /063 W  
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R 252258Z JAN 77  
FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2133

S E C R E T MANAGUA 0378

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, NU, PN  
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT SOMOZA SUPPORTS PANAMA'S CANAL ZONE CLAIM AND  
IMPROVES RELATIONS WITH PRESIDENT TORRIJOS

REF: A. MANAGUA 0281; B. PANAMA 0128

1. DURING MEETING WITH PRESIDENT SOMOZA JANUARY 24, HE TOLD ME THAT HE HAD SENT LETTER TO PRESIDENT CARTER SUPPORTING PANAMA'S CANAL ASPIRATIONS ALTHOUGH IT DID NOT SERVE NICARAGUAN INTERESTS. HE BELIEVED THAT A LARGER PANAMANIAN ROLE IN SETTING OF CANAL TOLLS WOULD MEAN HIGHER TOLLS FOR NICARAGUA GOODS SHIPPED BETWEEN ATLANTIC AND PACIFIC COASTS. SOMOZA SUPPORTED PANAMA OUT OF SOLIDARITY ON EMOTIONAL ISSUE.

2. HE SAID THAT HIS RELATIONS WITH PANAMANIAN PRESIDENT TORRIJOS HAD IMPROVED AND TORRIJOS EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR TREATMENT HE RECEIVED IN MANAGUA WHILE PARTICIPATING, WITH OTHER CENTRAL AMERICAN COUNTRIES, IN COFFEE RUST DISCUSSIONS ON JANUARY 17 (REFTEL A). SOMOZA ASSERTED THAT TORRIJOS' POLITICAL POSITION WAS MUCH WEAKER NOW THAN A YEAR AGO, BOTH WITHIN THE NATIONAL GUARD AND THE COUNTRY AT LARGE, AND HE BELIEVED THAT ECONOMIC PROBLEMS POSED SERIOUS THREAT TO HIS CONTINUED ROLE.

3. COMMENT: DESPITE RECENT IMPROVEMENT IN PERSONAL RELATIONS BE-  
SECRET

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TWEEN THE TWO PRESIDENTS, SOMOZA CONTINUES TO ENTERTAIN RESER-  
VATIOS ABOUT TORRIJOS' JUDGMENT AND RELIABILITY. SURPRISING PARTI-  
CIPATION OF TORRIJOS IN THE COFFEE RUST MEETING CALLED BY SOMOZA WAS  
LIKELY QUID PRO QUO FOR LATTER'S LETTER OF SUPPORT SENT TO PRESIDENT  
CARTER.  
THEBERGE

SECRET

NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Concepts:** POLICIES, FOREIGN RELATIONS, CANALS  
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**Decaption Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**TAGS:** PFOR, NU, PN, US, PQ, (SOMOZA DEBAYLE, ANASTASIO)  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
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